

2011 State of the Chugach



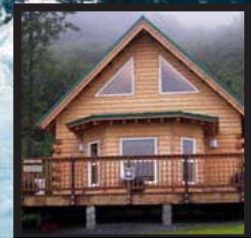
ECONOMIC
ENGINE



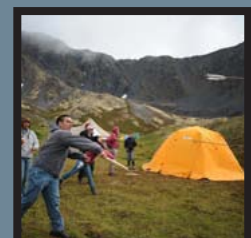
CHUGACH CHILDREN'S
FOREST



LOCAL & GLOBAL
CONNECTIONS



PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY
COLLABORATION



DIVERSE NETWORKS

CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST ANNUAL REPORT & OVERVIEW



R10-MB-771

THE CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST - ESTABLISHED 1907

Roughly the size of New Hampshire, the Chugach National Forest is the second largest single national forest in the U.S. This stunning landscape stretches from the salty waters and snowy peaks of Prince William Sound to the salmon-filled streams of the Kenai Peninsula and the Copper River Delta. It is one of the few places left in the world where glaciers still grind valleys from the hard rock of the earth. Its 5.4 million acres serve as the accessible backyard for half of Alaska's population. The forest has been continuously inhabited by Alaska Natives for more than 10,000 years; the first nations include the Chugach, Eyak, Ahtna and Dena'ina Athabascan.

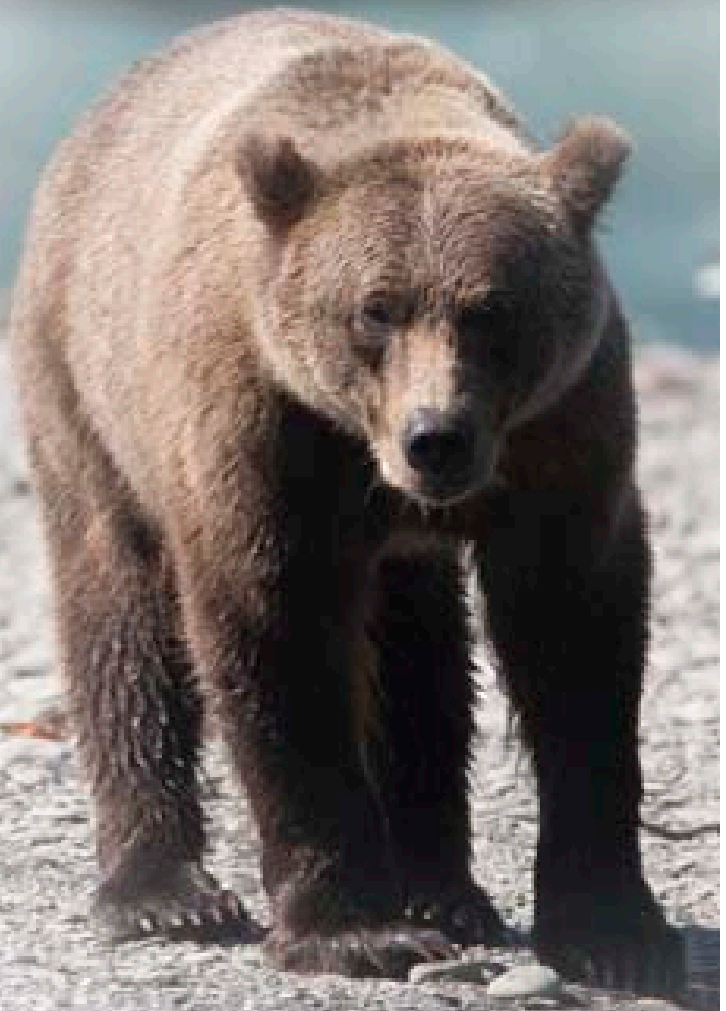
WE STRIVE TO:

- Work with our communities to provide economic value
- Engage youth and communities in our Chugach Children's Forest
- Highlight the unique local and global connections of the Chugach National Forest
- Sustain strategic partnerships and engage in community collaboration
- Connect with diverse audiences for employment and services

FACTS ABOUT THE CHUGACH

- 5.4 million acres
- 30 percent is covered by ice
- 500,000 visitors annually
- More than 48,000 acres of lakes, 18,000 miles of streams
- Prince William Sound boasts more bald eagles than the entire Lower 48
- One of the least roaded forests (less than two percent)

www.fs.usda.gov/chugach • on twitter @ChugachForestAK



THE CHUGACH LEADERSHIP TEAM



Terri Marceron
Forest Supervisor



Tim Charnon
Glacier District Ranger



Teresa Benson
Cordova District Ranger



Peter Keller, Deputy
Forest Supervisor



Travis Moseley
Seward District Ranger



Robert Stovall
Deputy District Ranger



The Chugach Leadership Team. Back row, left to right: Chris Lampshire, Kent Kohlase. Middle Row: Rachael Lesslie, Sara Boario, Travis Moseley, Mike Novy, Robert Stovall, Bert Davis, Dede Srb. Front Row: Tim Charnon, Peter Keller, Paul Clark, Teresa Benson, Terri Marceron.

ARRA & THE FOREST AS AN ECONOMIC ENGINE

One of the Chugach's highest priorities is furthering the Forest as an economic engine for our communities. In 2010 and 2011 the Chugach received funding from the American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA) for 13 projects. Seventeen separate contracts for approximately \$10.2 million were awarded. Eight projects have already been completed with the remaining to be finished by the end of the 2012 fiscal year.

The funding was distributed throughout the communities of the Chugach: **Kenai Peninsula** – \$8.5 million; **Cordova** – \$1.05 million; **Girdwood** – \$131,000; **Portage Valley** - \$561,000.

Dollars were used in a variety of project areas: **Hazardous Fuels (2 projects)** - \$960,000; **Facilities (4 projects)** - \$1.68 million; **Roads (1 project)** – \$1.06 million; **Trails (5 projects)** - \$6.36 million; **Watershed Restoration (1 project)** - \$200,000.

ARRA projects within the Chugach National Forest varied in scope, size and type, but all supported the Forest Service mission and contributed to private sector job creation.

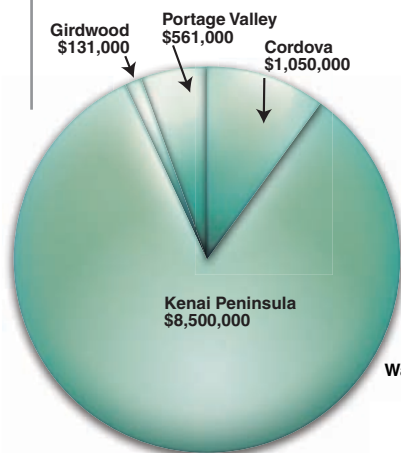


The new boardwalk at Alaganik Slough in Cordova.

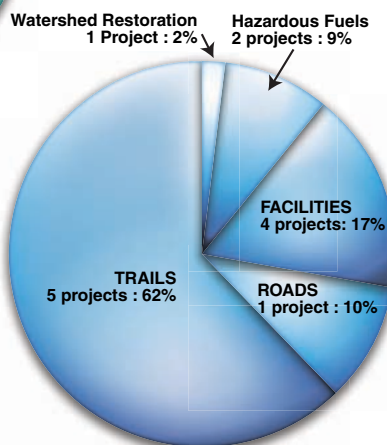


The bridge to span Placer River near Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop.

ARRA Funding Distribution by Area



ARRA Funding Distribution by Project Type



Refurbishing the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center.



The new bridge in place over Spokane Creek.

WHISTLE STOP PARTNERSHIP

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES IN CHUGACH BACKCOUNTRY

Tourism is a major sector of Alaska's economy, and a unique partnership between the Chugach National Forest and the Alaska Railroad Corporation provides the visiting public with a distinctive travel and recreational experience found nowhere else in the United States. At five designated Whistle Stops, passengers of all abilities will be able to exit the train to experience the awe-inspiring roadless backcountry of the Chugach National Forest through day and overnight trips.

Significant achievements in 2006-2011 have made this vision a reality. The first station at Spencer Glacier was completed in 2007, offering a variety of sightseeing, hiking, and camping opportunities. Construction on the second Whistle Stop at Grandview, along with a complex trail bridge that crosses the Placer River, will be completed in 2012. The Placer River Bridge will be the longest single-span, wood truss bridge in North America. An additional 2.8 miles of trail leading to Spencer Bench is complete. The trail leads to a stunning vista overlooking the valley and is the site of a proposed public use cabin. Passengers are now riding the Chugach Explorer, a self-propelled, fuel efficient railcar, to access the area.

Since 2008, over 20,000 people have enjoyed the Whistle Stop facilities and trails.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Ongoing trail construction (about one mile per year) to connect the Spencer and Grandview Whistle Stops, and the addition of a public use cabin in the Spencer area.
- Additional Whistle Stop stations are part of the original vision. Stations would include amenities such as wheelchair lifts, toilet, shelters and an information kiosk. Facilities will be located a safe distance from the railroad tracks to increase user safety. Other important recreation infrastructure including trails, campsites and cabins will be constructed over several years.
- New opportunities to provide commercial services at the Spencer site are being explored. Services may include overnight accommodations and guided upland and river trips.



The Numbers...

EMPLOYMENT

- 146 permanent employees living and investing in communities.
- Over 100 seasonal employees hired each year.

RECREATION/TOURISM:

- Recreation visitation on the Chugach is around 500,000 annual visits.*
- Every 10,000 visitors to the Chugach National Forest supports 16.6 direct jobs and 21.9 total jobs in southcentral Alaska.*
- 33,000 annual vehicle rentals are associated with recreation on the Chugach National Forest.*
- Individual, non-resident visitors to the Chugach spend \$319/per trip and residents spend \$55/per trip.*
- 148 permitted outfitters and guides – many are small businesses involved with recreation/tourism economy (the majority of non-resident visits on the Chugach involve the use of an outfitter or guide).*

FOREST HEALTH/TIMBER/FUELS:

- Forest goal of treating 700 acres per year. Our 5-year average is 736 acres/year.
- Personal Use and Alaska Free Use Firewood Programs
 - » On the Seward District 445 permits were issued, or 1475 CCF. Value of the wood is calculated at \$7,710.
 - » Cordova District issued 69 permits for the community woodlot – a partnership project with City of Cordova and DOT.
- Commercial logs
 - » Seward – 5 decks totaling 354 CCF & settlement sale of 180 CCF. The value of wood deck sales totaled \$25,285.

PRIVATE GOODS & SERVICES PURCHASED BY CNF

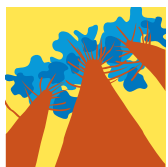
- Contracts: \$4,658,341
- Boat & Air Services: \$876,341
- Purchase Orders: \$3,782,000
- Card Transactions: 3571 transactions totalling \$1,119,980

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS/ RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCILS

- Prince William Sound RAC – estimated allocation: \$2,747,449. 33 projects approved.
- Kenai/Anchorage RAC – estimated allocation: \$568,477. 16 projects approved.



* Characterization of Resident and Non-resident Visitors to Alaska National Forests, 2010



The Chugach Children's Forest is a partnership led by Alaska Geographic and the USDA Forest Service. A symbolic designation for the entire Chugach National Forest, the Chugach Children's Forest creates exciting opportunities for Alaska's diverse youth, educators, and communities to connect with the magnificent Chugach National Forest and neighboring public lands.

The Chugach is a vast and inspiring mix of glaciers, mountains, rainforest, and wild coastline – and backyard to half of Alaska's population. People come from all over the world to experience this landscape yet children and families from many Anchorage neighborhoods have never set foot in the forest. Urban and rural youth alike often lack the resources to participate in life changing experiences in the outdoors.

The Chugach Children's Forest is a response to this growing disconnect between people – particularly young people – and the natural world around them. One goal is simply the health and joy that come from getting outside; another, to help all of us understand, care about, and ultimately help solve the challenges of today and tomorrow – from climate change to growing the next generation of public land leaders and employees.

IN 2011, THE CHUGACH CHILDREN'S FOREST ENGAGED JUST OVER 8,000 YOUTH AND FAMILIES. PROGRAMS AND EVENTS, INCLUDED:

- More than 50 sponsored components ranging from classrooms presentations, community events like Kids Fishing Days, science expeditions, service learning projects, teacher trainings, volunteer projects, and jobs/internships for youth and young adults.
- 10th Youth Eco-Forum in cooperation with Classrooms for Climate Symposium: 60 youth from around the circumpolar north and Alaska gathered in Anchorage and on the Chugach to learn more about environmental change and management choices.
- Portage Valley BioBlitz: 600 youth and families gathered for this 24-hour inventory of biodiversity in the heart of the Chugach Children's Forest.
- Youth Science and Media Expeditions: For the second year, youth from across Southcentral Alaska participated in expeditions in the Copper River Delta, Prince William Sound, and the Kenai Mountains.
- 37 interns and 13,300 volunteer hours.

CHECK OUT STORIES, PHOTOS AND MORE:

www.chugachchildrensforest.org
www.facebook.com/chugachchildrensforest
www.flickr.com/photos/66304761@N04/sets

sites hosted by Alaska Geographic

MORE THAN 30 PARTNERS CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PROGRAMMING

REI, Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council, Alaska Airlines, Walmart-Anchorage, Spirit of Youth/Alaska Teen Media Institute, Alaska Railroad, ESRI, Anchorage Parks Foundation, Municipality of Anchorage, Prince William Sound Science Center, Copper River Stewardship Program, Copper River Watershed Project, Babkin Charters, University of Alaska Anchorage, Alaska Pacific University, Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, Alaska State Parks, Youth Restoration Corps, Student Conservation Association, SAGA, Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Anchorage Waterways Council, Anchorage School District, Chugach School District, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, Cordova School District, Home Base After School Program, Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, Bureau of Land Management, Iditarod Trail Committee, National Park Service, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Alaska Department of Natural Resources



Icepatch survey expedition in the Kenai Mountains.



Kid's Hike and Fish Day in Cordova.



Prince William Sound Science & Media Expedition.



2011 Portage Valley BioBlitz.



Icworm safari at Begich, Boggs Visitor Center.



Volunteer stewardship at Trout Lake Cabin.

iTREC!

CONNECTING EDUCATORS ACROSS LANDSCAPES

Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom (iTREC) is a year-long professional development program that provides teachers with place-based service learning skills to help today's youth become lifelong stewards of Alaska's public lands, natural resources and cultural heritage. iTREC! teachers develop their own curriculum to increase student literacy skills and foster student understanding of and appreciation for the public lands and resources connected by over 2400 miles of the Iditarod National Historic Trail (INHT) – the section known as the Southern Trek traverses the Chugach National Forest.

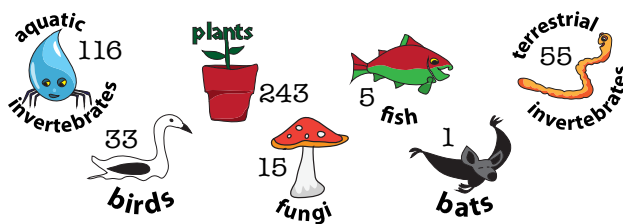
- 28 teachers from 7 communities have enrolled since the program began in 2010.
- Cumulative reach for the first two years of the program is approximately 2000 students.
- iTREC! curricula being developed in 11 subject focus areas.
- Preliminary evaluation results show a direct link between iTREC service learning projects and an increase in both physical activity and environmental awareness in students.



On July 23 & 24 Portage Valley rang with the sounds of naturalists, biologists and citizen scientists scouring the landscape for local flora and fauna. Chugach National Forest and Alaska Department of Fish & Game-Diversity Program brought the first BioBlitz to southcentral Alaska. The rainy weather didn't keep over 600 people from heading out to Portage to watch the 30 presentations that were offered or from going outside to be part of a survey team.

The survey teams had great success cataloging the Valley's biodiversity: 468 different species were observed.

HERE'S HOW IT BROKE DOWN:



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS



CHUGACH, TONGASS PARTNER ON IYF 2011



The United Nations General Assembly designated 2011 International Year of Forests (IYF). To celebrate, Alaska's national forests – the Chugach and Tongass – unveiled a year-long campaign to bring attention to the critical resources, innovative programs and celebrations that distinguish the nation's two largest national forests.

The campaign included the unique, collectible poster series (featured at right) emphasizing the importance of the two forests to the many people who live, work and play on these landscapes. The posters, along with several signature events, served as the center-piece of the campaign and more than 5000 were distributed to the public. All Region 10 employees received an 8x10 set of the posters, and several framed prints were presented to local, regional and national dignitaries and leaders.

Vinyl banners based on the posters were prominently displayed in forest service offices, community spaces, and featured at prominent local businesses, such as REI-Anchorage. More than 22,000 stickers were handed out, and advertisements were placed in 16 community papers highlighting IYF and the forests' signature events. Events were also promoted through a jointly hosted blog – myalaskaforests.com – which proved so successful that it will be continued in partnership with the National Forest Foundation.

"MORE THAN A PLACE TO VISIT, IT'S WHERE WE LIVE"

Our campaign theme underscored that the Chugach and Tongass provide a backyard experience and workplace for nearly two-thirds of Alaskans, and have been home to Alaska Natives from time immemorial. From Anchorage to Juneau, Ketchikan to Cordova, Prince of Wales to Prince William Sound, Alaskans in 43 different communities recreate, make a living, and meet the subsistence needs of their families in and around Alaska's national forests.

SUPPORTING POSTER MESSAGES: Explore Your Backyard; Celebrate Your Heritage; Cherish Your Inheritance; Find Your Inspiration



RECOGNITION:

- The posters took "Best in Show" at the annual American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) Alaska Chapter's annual "The Big One" Awards: www.thebigone.us/2011.
- The overall campaign and posters were recognized with a bronze Aurora Award by the Public Relations Society of America's Alaska Chapter.

Subsistence Harvest Summary

Freshwater fish permits for Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta

- 68 permits issued in 2011 – 489 coho and 35 sockeye harvested.
- 48 permits issued in 2010 – anglers harvested 231 coho salmon

Unit 6C moose hunt – Copper River Delta

- 2011 – 928 Cordova residents applied for 25 moose permits (10 cow moose, 15 bull moose) issued through drawing open only to Cordova residents.
- 10 cow moose permits issued – 10 cow moose harvested
- 13 bull permits issued – 9 bulls harvested
- 2010 - 846 Cordova residents applied for 33 moose permits (15 cow moose, 18 bull moose) issued through drawing open only to Cordova residents.
- 2010 harvest was 13 cow moose and 13 bull moose

Unit 6D Mountain Goat

- 2010 – issued 10 permits to residents of Chenega Bay, Tatitlek and Cordova – 2 mountain goats harvested

Unit 7 and 15 Moose

- 2011 - 23 permits issued to residents of Cooper Landing – 1 moose harvested
- 28 permits issued to residents of Hope for Unit 7 – no moose harvested

- 2010 – 18 permits issued to residents of Cooper Landing – 1 moose harvested
- 14 permits issued to residents of Hope for Unit 7 – 1 moose harvested

Unit 15 Moose October hunt

- 2011 – 8 permits issued to residents of Cooper Landing – no harvest
- 2010 – 3 permits issued to residents of Cooper Landing – no harvest

Unit 7 Caribou

- 2011 – 28 permits issued to residents of Hope - no harvest
- 2010 – 17 permits issued to residents of Hope – 2 caribou harvested

Russian River Salmon

- 2011 – 69 permits issued to Cooper Landing Residents – harvested 826 sockeye salmon
- 19 permits issued to Hope residents - harvested 139 sockeye salmon
- 2010 – 65 permits issued to Cooper Landing Residents – harvested 679 sockeye salmon
- 20 permits issued to Hope residents – harvested 172 sockeye salmon

CLASSROOMS FOR CLIMATE

The Chugach National Forest, a natural campus for studying environmental and climate change



Keynote Speaker Majora Carter opens the Symposium

In May more than 250 participants gathered in Anchorage to attend **Classrooms for Climate: A Symposium on the Changing Chugach, Northern Ecosystems, and the Implications for Science & Society**. The conference, co-hosted by the University of Alaska Anchorage and Chugach National Forest, was a first-step in bringing together partners in climate inquiry, education and management from across southcentral Alaska.

Covering everything from the role of glaciers at sea level, to the migration of tree species in a warming climate, scientists gave participants a thorough understanding of climate science and ecology as well as data and tools for monitoring and modeling changes.

Participants explored how to adapt to changes in both ecosystems *and* human systems through historical perspectives from Alaska's indigenous populations and current-day examples of how everyday people are taking on these challenges and crafting solutions. A critical perspective on everyday action was provided by keynote speaker Majora Carter, who drew a large public audience to learn more about her experience as the founder of Sustainable South Bronx and host of the environmental-themed public radio series, *The Promised Land*.

Youth events were developed in coordination with the conference, including a Green Jobs Forum for local youth, and the 10th annual Youth Eco-Forum, which assembled participants from across the circumpolar north to explore research on climate change and forested landscapes. At the end of the week, the youth presented a declaration for action to leaders from the Forest and University. The conference was made possible by a number of committed partners, including the *Alaska Coastal Rainforest Center, Alaska Geographic, Institute of the North, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action*, and the *Northern Forum*.

CORDOVA'S 13TH ANNUAL COPPER RIVER DELTA SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

Researchers have long been drawn to the Copper River Delta. The largest contiguous wetland complex on the Pacific Coast of North America, the Delta is an important resource for both fish and wildlife. This system provides a unique opportunity for researchers to study intact wetlands, making this area a de-facto "living laboratory." The Delta has attracted researchers from a wide variety of public and private institutions, a number that continues to increase as information on the Delta is shared throughout the scientific community.

On March 22-24, the Copper River Delta Science Symposium brought researchers together from across the country to share current knowledge on a range of subjects, identify future research needs (including those around climate change) and plan future projects. The event, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service, EcoTrust, Alaska SeaGrant, and the Prince William Sound Science Center brought together more than 75 participants, with an additional 30 from the local community attending public talks and events. There were 38 research tasks and 15 posters presented. A lifetime achievement award was presented to Jim King, retired pilot-biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for his extensive work with swans and wetland conservation in Alaska.

This opportunity for collaboration has strengthened existing partnerships as well as provided opportunities for new explorations. The Pacific Northwest Research Station, in collaboration with Loyola, Michigan State, Notre Dame and Oregon State Universities, has recently been awarded a two-year National Fish and Wildlife Federation Grant to investigate the effects of Climate Change on the system. Other collaborations continue to unfold as current work is published.

Papers and presentations from the Symposium are available at www.crks.org/CRDSS and www.ecotrust.org/copperriver.

Following on the success of the symposium the Forest continues to partner with UAA to coordinate efforts in the Chugach Region. One project engages stakeholder communities in a dialogue on their perspectives on the roles and contributions the Chugach landscape offers in terms of economic, social, and cultural services. Results of this analysis will provide Forest managers insight into the Chugach's niche in the broader landscape of southcentral Alaska.

The second project evaluates ecosystem services most at risk to changes predicted in the region's climate, relative to the key economic sectors and socio-cultural systems. This climate vulnerability assessment pairs the climate modeling expertise of University of Alaska climatologists and economists with ecologists and managers from the Chugach and other agencies in the region.



CROOKED CREEK INFO SITE CELEBRATES OPENING

The City of Valdez and the Chugach National Forest announced the grand opening of the Crooked Creek Information Site on August 5, 2011. Mayor David Cobb and Cordova District Ranger Teresa Benson were on hand for the official ribbon cutting and to welcome everyone to the new site.

The stylish new log building is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and replaces the trailer that served as a visitor information site since the late 1990s. The new structure is more spacious and accommodates more visitors, exhibits and displays. Located at Mile .5 on the Richardson Highway, a spot known locally as the “salmon turnaround,” the site is a popular and well-situated place to watch wildlife and spawning salmon.

KENAI-RUSSIAN RIVER INTERAGENCY TEAM

The Russian River Inter-agency Coordination Group was formed to reduce the potential for human-bear conflicts at the confluence of the Kenai and Russian rivers, a heavily visited area known for its easy access to a world-class fishery and recreation site. Each year the *Forest Service*, *U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*, *Alaska Department of Fish & Game*, *Alaska State Parks*, *Kenaitze Indian Tribe*, and *Cook Inlet Region, Inc.* support this work by working across jurisdictional boundaries and through the *StreamWatch Volunteer* program.



This past year, the group hosted a series of public workshops between April and October to seek additional ideas on how to reduce human-bear conflicts. Based on this collaborative public process, the agencies are

developing a five-year action plan for management of the Kenai-Russian River area that will be implemented in 2012-2016.

For more information, visit projects.ecr.gov/kenai-russianriver.



The Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center (CNFAIC) is one of approximately fifteen agency avalanche centers across the nation affiliated with the US Forest Service National Avalanche Center. The CNFAIC is a partnership between Chugach National Forest and a non-profit Friends Group that provides fund-raising, outreach, and financial support to the avalanche center. The CNFAIC provides an important and popular service to the general public in one of the most actively used winter recreation regions of Alaska, a state with the highest per capita avalanche fatality rate in the nation.

The center's mission is to provide current and accurate avalanche and mountain weather information to the backcountry public and offer basic avalanche awareness education. Public safety is of primary concern, and the CNFAIC strives to deliver clear and concise information that benefits any user, from the beginner backcountry traveler to the professional avalanche forecaster. The CNFAIC advises backcountry users, including skiers, snowboarders, snowmachiners, snowshoers, hikers, and mountaineers about the current avalanche danger. It provides daily avalanche bulletins describing the current avalanche danger using industry standard descriptions and definitions. CNFAIC also offers educational events to the public, giving lectures and backcountry sessions at a basic avalanche awareness level. These opportunities are provided free of charge to the general public, in classrooms, and to user groups who request expertise.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/FESTIVALS

Community events around the Chugach highlight the strong connections between the Forest and the people who live there. Forest Service employees live and work in communities across the Chugach and actively participate in local events and festivals. Each year Chugach employees plan, staff, and attend numerous events.

The small town of Cordova has many festivals and events, and the Forest plays a prominent role in many; most notably, the *Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival*, now in its 22nd year.

The *Girdwood Fungus Fair* is growing in popularity and brings the public together with Chugach scientists, resource specialists, and educators to explore the Forest and understand fungi, an underappreciated cultural resource and vital component of forested ecosystems.

The Chugach doesn't always take the lead in festivals and events but is often an integral part of any community or interagency effort. Our participation in large-scale community happenings such as *Get Outdoors Day*, *Public Lands Day* and the *State Fair* offers special opportunities to share the outdoors with a broad and diverse audience.

Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Internships

ANSEP is a sustainable longitudinal educational pathway that leads Alaska Native and other rural students from middle school to university graduation in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In the summer of 2011 the Chugach hosted two Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) students.



Carson Withers and Chugach Engineer Kent Kohlase.

Carson Withers, a high-school senior entering UAA, worked in the Forest's engineering department, and focused on road and facility condition surveys. Carson shared the following about his summer internship: "I learned new things about engineering and about working in the field, as well as discovering more of what I would like to do later in life... Overall it was an amazing experience, one that I can say may have changed me for the better and it's something I would enjoy again in the future."



Chelsea Malstrom taking a well-earned break.

Chelsea Malstrom worked with the Prince William Sound Zone Aquatic team. She travelled to remote parts of the Cordova district, stocking lakes with native trout, rebuilding fish ladders, conducting salmon escapement surveys, assisting with aquatic invertebrate studies, building rock weirs as water control structures, assessing fish passage, modifying a spawning channel, collecting salmon otoliths, and presenting educational programs for local kids.

Malstrom studied different salmon species, fish diseases, data collection and monitoring methods. Asked about her experience working on the fish crew, she said, "I gained a significant amount of experience that will not only help me in my upcoming classes but will be essential to my future career opportunities. I would like to thank ANSEP and my U.S. Forest Service supervisors for a great summer and all the amazing learning opportunities."

ANSEP has formed the Indigenous Alliance for Engineering and Science Education to engage other Indigenous groups in a national effort to increase science and engineering opportunities available for Natives across the nation. The Alliance has grown to include 12 higher education institutions in nine states.

For more information visit www.ansep.net

TRIBAL CONNECTIONS

The Chugach National Forest recognizes the importance of building strong working relationships with Alaska Native tribes and corporations. As adjacent landowners, tribal ecological and cultural knowledge is central to making informed decisions on management of the land. The Forest maintains relationships with 12 federally recognized tribes, 12 village corporations, three regional groups, two Native regional non-profits, and two ANCSA Regional Corporations – *Chugach Alaska and Cook Inlet Region, Inc.* The relationship and consultation extends beyond the Forest boundaries to tribes that currently are not located on the Chugach, but have historical ties to this land. The Forest is also a strong participant in the USFS Alaska Region's *Alaska Tribal Leaders Council (ATLC)*. These monthly meetings offer the opportunity to advance cooperative relationships, collaboration, and the furtherance of government-to-government partnerships in promoting sustainable forests, resources and communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Secure Rural Schools project grant to the Native village of Eyak for treating 200 acres of Eyak land to improve moose habitat.
- Secure Rural Schools project grant to avoid degradation of Tatitlek Corporation lands associated with an access easement.
- High school youth from the Kenaitze and Qutekcak Tribes worked with the Forest Service through the Chugach Children's Forest program to plant trees and survey traditional tribal hunting grounds.

EXPLORE THE CHUGACH!

www.fs.usda.gov/chugach • on twitter @ChugachForestAK

SPRING

Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival



The most inviting small town in Alaska just may be Cordova, an Alaskan fishing community and birder's paradise. Each year during the first weekend in May, the community welcomes millions of shorebirds to the Copper River Delta, the largest contiguous wetlands complex on North America's Pacific Coast. Community events, workshops and educational opportunities are offered throughout the week. More information available at the **Cordova Chamber of Commerce** (www.cordovachamber.com).

PLANNING — BY AIR: At least two commercial airlines and several charter air companies provide flights to Cordova. **BY CAR:** Ferry from Whittier (60 miles southeast of Anchorage) to Cordova.

SUMMER

Begich, Boggs Visitor Center & Prince William Sound



Begich, Boggs Visitor Center

The Visitor Center is built on the remnant of a terminal moraine left by Portage Glacier. This world-class facility houses interactive exhibits, a 200-seat movie theatre and the Portage Valley Learning Center. The Learning Center serves as a base for school-age children taking part in Forest Service sponsored programs.

Prince William Sound

Kayaking is a wonderful way to be on the water and check out some of the 200 busy seabird colonies. Prince William Sound's more than 3,500 miles of intricate coastline, tidewater glaciers and bountiful marine life are an open invitation to kayakers to explore this remote area. Plan a multiple day trip to access remote campsites or one of 14 cabins in the Sound. All campsites are primitive. Some campsites in Blackstone Bay and Culross Passage have been hardened to provide durable camping surfaces.

PLANNING — From Anchorage, 60 miles southeast towards Whittier.

Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop



Hop on the train for a drive-free option into the Chugach National Forest. The Alaska Railroad stops off at Spencer Glacier, the first of a series of "whistle stops" in the Forest. Once off the train, visitors have a choice of recreation possibilities.

- Take advantage of a guided tour along the fully accessible 2.6 mile trail to the glacier.
- Enjoy a picnic at the historically themed whistle stop shelter.
- Create your own multi-day adventure with family and friends at the site's group campsite or enjoy it with outfitters and guides.

If you want a longer hike take a self-guided six-mile hike to the face of Spencer Glacier. For the really adventurous, a hike deep into Grandview Valley is a great way to experience some exceptional views while keeping an eye out for wildlife and beautiful wildflowers.

PLANNING — Contact the Alaska Railroad for the train schedule to Spencer (alaskarailroad.com). There are several companies offering guided hikes, kayak and boat adventures. Companies operating in the area are listed on the Chugach website.

FALL

Coho Fishing on Russian River



The summer sockeye (red) salmon runs draw the infamous crowds, but both solitude and fish can be found later in the year. With a season that starts in early August and continues through September, this is your chance to catch the "big one" (coho or silvers average between 10-12 lbs) without all the crowds of summer. Fall silvers can be energetic, so be sure to bring your waterproof gear and a camera to capture your catch and the fall colors.

PLANNING — Head down the Seward Highway to the Sterling Highway intersection (milepost 81). Campground is at milepost 54 on the Sterling Highway.

WINTER:

Trout Lake Cabin on Resurrection Pass Trail



Winter is a great time to head to this cabin. Only seven miles down the trail, it provides the perfect day of exercise before relaxing in front of a warm wood stove. Your options for travel to the cabin increase in the winter. Hiking a packed trail, skiing, snowshoeing and, during odd numbered years, snowmachining mean there is something for the whole family. If you're lucky the wind will have blown the lake smooth and you can practice your double axels on the ice.

PLANNING — Head out from Anchorage on the Seward Highway to the Sterling Highway turnoff (milepost 81). Milepost 52.8 is the trailhead. *Note: Winter travel from Sterling Highway trailhead is not recommended. Use West Juneau Road or Bean Creek Route.*